

COMPLIANCE REVIEW

O. H. CLOSE YOUTH CORRECTIONAL FACILITY



Prepared by:

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
Office of Audits and Compliance

Final Report

December 2008

CASE CONFERENCE SYSTEM

Institutions & Camp Branch Manual, Sections 3282, 3293, 4003, 4025, 4030, 4035, 4040, and 4070

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Audits and Compliance, Compliance/Peer Review Branch (CPRB) reviewed the Institution and Camps Branch Manual (I&C Manual), Sections 3282, 3293, 4003, 4025, 4030, 4035, 4040, 4045, and 4070 to determine whether O. H. Close Youth Correctional Facility (OHCYCF) is in compliance with the Case Conference System policies regarding time constraints. All case conferences are documented on the Individualized Change Plan (ICP).

The review period was January 1, 2006 through December 1, 2008. The CPRB chose a 10 percent sample of wards who are assigned to OHCYCF. The total population of wards at OHCYCF on December 1, 2008 was 159. The facility has 6 halls. In order to obtain a fair sample size, the CPRB reviewed 18 ICPs; 3 from each of the 6 halls.

The CPRB determined that OHCYCF is not in compliance with the I&C Manual, Sections 4030, 4035, and 4070.

The findings are as follows:

- Initial case conference did not occur within five weeks of the ward's arrival.
- First progress case conference not reviewed within 60 days of the initial case conference.
- Program credit system not publicly displayed.

BACKGROUND

The Case Conference System was selected as a review area to ensure the ward's treatment and services are being documented. The initial documentation on the ICP occurs when the ward is assigned to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) Reception Center and Clinic. Upon arrival at the Reception Center and Clinic, the ward is assigned to a Casework Specialist (CWS) that develops an ICP. The CWS prepares the Initial Case Review (ICR). The ICR includes a review of the ward's treatment needs, issues, screenings, evaluations, and High School Graduation Plan. The ICP is placed in the hall file and documented in the Ward Information Network (WIN) system.

The ward is then transferred to the appropriate DJJ facility according to their treatment needs and classification score. Subsequently, the ward is assigned to a living unit and provided with a treatment team consisting of the following: Youth Correctional Counselor (YCC), Senior Youth Correctional Counselor (SYCC), and Treatment Team Supervisor (TTS)/Supervising Casework Specialist (SCWS). Additionally, the ward is provided with one of the following: Parole Agent I (PAI), CWS, or a Case Manager (CM).

The ward's assigned treatment team is required to maintain a record of the ward's progress towards his/her Identified Treatment Issues on the ICP. The ICP is updated and signed by the YCC and PAI/CWS/CM at each case conference. The initial case conference is conducted within five weeks of the ward's arrival to the facility. The ward's first progress case conference is scheduled within 60 days of the initial case conference. Subsequent case conferences are scheduled every 120 days.

At OHCYCF, the days of case conferences are determined by the principal, who follows the California Education Authority Academic Calendar. The case conference days are on Tuesday and Thursday, alternating between a.m. and p.m. The a.m. time allotment is a two hour window period from 0735 to 0935. The p.m. time allotment is a two hour window period from 1300 to 1500. The principal allows a two hour window period to conduct case conferences in order to comply with federal and State laws. The State law requires each ward to receive 240 minutes in school daily. The assigned PAI, CWS, or CM provides the names of the wards scheduled for a case conference to education staff and the treatment team.

The specific objectives of the review were to determine whether:

- PAI, CWS, or CM develops and distributes a case conference schedule monthly;
- The case conference schedule is distributed to the YCC, Principal, and TTS/SCWS;
- Initial case conference is held within five weeks of the ward's arrival to the institution;

- First progress case conference is held within 60 days of the initial case conference;
- Subsequent case conferences are conducted within 120 days.

The CPRB determined whether the objectives were met by reviewing:

- I&C Manual, Sections 3282, 3293, 4003 4025, 4030, 4035, 4040, 4045, 4050, 4065, 4070, and 4075;
- WIN system;
- Facilities policies;
- Hall files;
- Safety and Welfare Remedial Plan;
- Roster of the facility;
- ICP; and
- Staff interviews.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding I: Initial case conference did not occur within five weeks of the ward's arrival.

Of the 18 ICPs reviewed, the CPRB found that 8 (44 percent) initial case conferences did not occur within 5 weeks of the ward's arrival to OHCYCF.

The CPRB determined the reason the initial case conferences are not being held within the time constraints is due to a lack of training and caseworkers working part time. For example, a PAI was enrolled in the adult academy for five weeks and continued to perform the PAI duties. OHCYCF does not have any part-time caseworkers as of the date of this report.

Criteria:

I&C Manual, Section 4030, states: "All wards shall have an initial case conference within five weeks of the ward's arrival at the institution. At that time, the case conference committee, with input from the ward, shall assess the ward's needs and identified treatment issues as documented on the ward's ICP. Upon completion of the case conference, all participants shall sign and date the ICP. A copy of the completed ICP shall be filed in the ward's Living Unit File."

Recommendations:

Update the OHCYCF Operations Manual Case Conference Sections to incorporate the entire case conference procedure.

Provide training to the PAI, CWS, and CM on the tracking procedures and how to meet the case conference time constraints.

Create a monthly monitoring system to ensure time constraints for the initial case conferences are met.

Have back up staff assume the caseworker's responsibilities if they attend prolonged training.

Finding II: First progress case conference not reviewed within 60 days of the initial case conference.

Of the 18 ICPs reviewed, the CPRB found that 7 (39 percent) of the first progress case conferences were not reviewed within 60 days of the initial case conference.

The CPRB determined that 7 of the first progress case conferences not being completed within the required 60 day timeframe is attributed to a caseworker being assigned to the academy for training and the facility not providing adequate training.

For example, a retired annuitant was utilized to help in training a new caseworker that had received little prior training.

Criteria:

I&C Manual, Section 4035, states: "All wards shall have a progress case conference no more than 60 days after the initial case conference."

Recommendations:

Update the OHCYCF Operations Manual Case Conference Sections to incorporate the entire case conference procedure.

Provide training to the PAI, CWS, and CM for tracking the time constraints and establishing priorities.

Create a monthly monitoring system to ensure time constraints for the first progress case conference are met.

Ensure PAI, CWS, and CM routine duties are completed when given additional assignments.

Finding III: Program credit system not publicly displayed

Of the 6 halls reviewed, 4 (67 percent) failed to have a local program credit system displayed on the bulletin board in the dayroom.

The CPRB determined the reason the program credit system is not displayed is because staff and wards are removing the item from the bulletin board. In addition, the CPRB determined staff is not monitoring the items on the bulletin board.

Criteria:

I&C Manual, Section 4070, states: "Publish a written statement outlining the local program credits system to be made available to offenders and staff."

Recommendations:

Display the written program credit system on the locked bulletin board located in the dayroom on all of the halls at OHCYCF.

SYCC or designated staff shall monitor the bulletin board weekly to ensure the program credit system remains displayed.

Review of the Case Conference System

O. H. CLOSE YOUTH CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

GLOSSARY

CPRB	Compliance Peer Review Branch
CM	Case Manager
CWS	Casework Specialist
DJJ	Division of Juvenile Justice
I&C Manual	Institution and Camps Branch Manual
ICP	Individualized Change Plan
OH CYCF	O H. Close Youth Correctional Facility
ICR	Initial Case Review
PAI	Parole Agent I
YCC	Youth Correctional Counselor
SCWS	Supervising Casework Specialist
SYCC	Senior Youth Correctional Counselor
TTS	Treatment Team Supervisor
WIN	Ward Information Network